DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 223 868 CE 034 430

TITLE	Handbook on Youth Participation in Youth Employment Programs.
INSTITUTION	National Commission on Resources for Youth, Inc., New York, N.Y.
PUB DATE	Jun 82
NOTE	48p.
AVAILABLE FROM	National Commission on Resources for Youth, Inc., 605 Commonwealth Avenue, Boston, MA 02215 ($5.00).
PUB TYPE	Guides - Non-Classroom Use (055)
EDRS PRICE	MF01 Plus Postage. PC Not Available from EDRS.
DESCRIPTORS	*Adolescents; Career Education; Case Studies; *Economically Disadvantaged; *Employment Programs; Federal Legislation; Federal Programs; Job Skills; *Participation; Program Descriptions; Program Development; *Program Implementation; Youth; *Youth Programs
IDENTIFIERS	Comprehensive Employment and Training Act; *Youth Participation

ABSTRACT

This handbook provides Comprehensive Employment and Training Act (CETA) prime sponsors and youth program planners with information on planning and implementing youth participation in their employment programs. (Youth participation means projects in which young people assume responsibility for work that meets genuine community needs.) Section 1 explains youth participation and its relevance for youth employment, providing steps prime sponsors can take to foster youth participation in their own programs. Section 2 provides case studies of four CETA programs that exemplify youth participation in terms of four concerns related to reconciling youth participation with CETA regulations, priorities, and concerns: program development, supervision, skill training, and evaluation. Descriptions in more specific detail, of how different projects have dealt with these concerns, follow in section 3. Section 4 focuses on monitoring, evaluating, and assessing and on how young people can be involved in those processes. The final section explains how prime sponsors and project operators can obtain technical assistance from the National Commission on Resources for Youth, Inc. to help them introduce or increase youth participation. (YLB)

****
* Reproductions supplied by EDRS are the best that can be made *
* from the original document. *
****

ED223868

HANDBOOK ON YOUTH PARTICIPATION IN YOUTH EMPLOYMENT PROGRAMS

CE 034430

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
NATIONAL INSTITUTE OF EDUCATION
EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES INFORMATION CENTER (ERIC)

This document has been reproduced as received from the person or organization originating it.

Minor changes have been made to improve reproduction quality.

Points of view or opinions stated in this document do not necessarily represent official NIE position or policy.

"PERMISSION TO REPRODUCE THIS MATERIAL IN MICROFICHE ONLY HAS BEEN GRANTED BY

O Helen

TO THE EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES INFORMATION CENTER (ERIC)."

THE NATIONAL COMMISSION ON RESOURCES FOR YOUTH

YOUTH PARTICIPATION
IN YOUTH EMPLOYMENT PROGRAMS

THE NATIONAL COMMISSION ON RESOURCES FOR YOUTH, INC. was founded in 1967 as an independent, non-profit organization to expand opportunities for young people to assume active, responsible roles in their communities--what NCRY calls Youth Participation. In programs of Youth Participation, youth gain direct experience in the real world, making decisions, working in partnership with their peers and with adults, and meeting genuine community needs. A comprehensive Youth Participation program also provides for youth to reflect critically on their experience, and to study related subject matter. NCRY seeks out, promotes and assists Youth Participation programs that recognize the capabilities and developmental needs of young people.

Bruce Dollar, Project Director
Peter Kleinbard, Executive Director

© Copyright 1982

The National Commission on Resources for Youth, Inc.
36 West 44th Street, New York, NY 10036

All Rights Reserved

June, 1982

TABLE OF CONTENTS

PREFACE — By Bruce Dollar — i

SECTION I — YOUTH PARTICIPATION 1

- Youth Participation and Job Skills: What Employers Really Want 2
- What Prime Sponsors Can Do 4

SECTION II — FOUR CETA PROGRAMS THAT MADE YOUTH PARTICIPATION WORK 7

- "Fantastic, Amazing Ideas" - Youth Action Program 8
- "Now I Can Do It All" - Students Serving Students 10
- "Connecting With the Outside World" - Bartram School for Human Services 13
- "Developing A Sense of Accountability" - Looking Glass Community Improvement Project 15

SECTION III — MORE IDEAS 17

- Program Development and Decision-Making By Youth 18
- Supervision and Youth Responsibility 21
- Preparation for Employment: Skills and Contact. 24
- Preparation for Employment: Attitudes and Aptitudes. 26
- Special Programs for Special People. 28

SECTION IV — MONITORING, EVALUATION AND ASSESSMENT 30

SECTION V — TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE FOR YOUTH PARTICIPATION. . . 33

- Youth Participation is Hard to Do 34
- NCRY's Technical Assistance 35
- What Youth Can Do: Types of Youth Participation. 36
- What NCRY Will Do: Types of Technical Assistance 37
- What the Prime Sponsor Will Do 39

APPENDIX — TABLE 1: OVERVIEW OF TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE FOR YOUTH PARTICIPATION 40

PREFACE

This handbook is directed to CETA Prime Sponsors and youth program planners who wish to implement Youth Participation in their employment programs.

Youth Participation here means projects in which young people assume responsibility for work that meets genuine community needs. Assuming responsibility means that youth have opportunities to make decisions that affect their projects.

The purpose of this handbook is to give readers a headstart in planning for Youth Participation. Although Youth Participation is difficult to do, it has been done successfully in many places. Effective programs create a base of knowledge from which others may learn, and both research and practice have shown that people learn best from the experiences of others like themselves. For this reason, this handbook places great emphasis on examples from actual Youth Participation projects.

Although Youth Participation as a principle can be applied in virtually any programmatic context, CETA programs pose a special set of circumstances. Prime Sponsors often ask whether Youth Participation can be reconciled with CETA regulations, priorities, and concerns. How can youth play a role in program planning when programs must be planned before they can be funded? Doesn't the requirement of close supervision conflict with giving young people responsibility for their activities? What about job skills? How can Youth Participation be evaluated? Because of these concerns, this handbook has been structured to provide concrete answers to these questions.

The book opens with an explanation of Youth Participation and its relevance for youth employment. There is a section on steps Prime Sponsors can take to foster Youth Participation in their own programs. Next, there are case studies of four CETA programs that exemplify Youth Participation in terms of the concerns mentioned above. Descriptions of how many different projects have dealt with these concerns in more specific detail follow. A separate section deals with monitoring, evaluation, and assessment, and how young people can be involved in those processes. A final section explains how Prime Sponsors and project operators can obtain technical assistance from NCRY to help them introduce or increase Youth Participation.

This handbook provides answers to many questions posed by Prime Sponsors locally about starting and operating Youth Participation. We hope it will result in the adaptation of the ideas it contains in new settings.

Bruce Dollar
Associate Director
National Commission on
Resources for Youth

I. YOUTH PARTICIPATION

The success of the youth employment legislation first passed in 1977 depends heavily upon the resourcefulness of Prime Sponsors. Under the law, Primes are responsible for creating programs that "enhance the job prospects of economically disadvantaged youth." In addition to the broad mandate, the law requires that Primes maintain specific program standards for supervision, labor quality, post-program placement, and so on. Most Primes will readily agree that "quality" has been the elusive ingredient in the youth employment formula. The Department of Labor has called for "meaningful" placements and a "developmental" approach, yet many Primes find these concepts obscured by the relentless pressure of reports and proposals, eligibility screening, and program coordination.

One way to satisfy the Comprehensive Employment and Training Act (CETA) requirements and meet the developmental needs of youth is Youth Participation. In Youth Participation programs young people assume responsibility for work that meets genuine community needs. The importance of this is acknowledged in the original Planning Charter for the legislation, which states:

> *Youth Participation should be emphasized. YEDPA is based on the premise that our nation's youth are an underutilized resource. Most young persons can fill responsible positions if they are given a chance, and responsibility is a basic element in the developmental process.*

In Youth Participation young people take responsibility for making and following through on their own decisions. Unlike many programs that start by asking what adults or social agencies can do for young people, Youth Participation assumes that young people can be contributors as well as instruction-followers, participators as well as spectators.

YOUTH PARTICIPATION AND JOB SKILLS: WHAT EMPLOYERS REALLY WANT

In most Youth Participation projects young people acquire specific vocational skills that qualify them for jobs in fields ranging from construction to clerical work, nursing to forestry, counseling to sales. Because of its emphasis on collaboration with adults, Youth Participation also exposes young people to varied employment choices. For entry level jobs, however, many employers are more concerned about mature working attitudes than about specific job skills. A. U.S. Department of Labor study entitled *Employers Expectations* (1980) asked employers to rate the qualities they wanted most in new employees. Dependability, responsibility, and the ability to work with others headed the list. On the basis of this research, the report concludes:

> *"The employer emphasis on employee work attitudes cannot be overlooked if the new member of the labor force is to successfully crack the job market... One of the major responsibilities of the educational institutions and social services deliverers is to ingrain personal work habits in youth during the education/placement process."*

Youth Participation does just that. Young people in Youth Participation projects are expected to accept responsibility, show initiative, make decisions, and follow through on them. As a result, they are helped to become more attractive as potential employees, and they acquire a sense of themselves as responsible, contributing members of society.

In short, Youth Participation is a strategy for using CETA employment programs to meet the developmental needs of youth. The best Youth Participation programs conform to CETA guidelines and include the following components:

- *Challenging, meaningful tasks. Difficult tasks expand skills and build confidence for young people. Although some work may be easy or routine, some must be challenging. Tutoring children, caring for elderly, or restoring neighborhood buildings are all examples of tasks that require young people to increase their skills and capacities. Meaningful work brings real benefits to the community, so young people have the satisfaction of being needed.*

WHAT PRIME SPONSORS CAN DO

To establish Youth Participation, Primes must often overcome difficulties. Usually Primes are not directly involved in implementing programs and have little day-to-day control over operations. However, Primes can take specific steps to select, train, and support adults who will integrate Youth Participation into CETA programs. By offering how-to information, establishing criteria for Request for Proposals (RFP), and making resource people available, Primes can project and enforce their expectations. Programs run by the Prime Sponsor staff are perhaps the easiest to influence, yet, with planning and persistence, a Prime can also affect the type and quality of programs run by local Community Based Organizations (CBO) and Local Education Agencies (LEA).

The single most important action a Prime can take to encourage Youth Participation is to display an interest in it. Often Primes have to educate their own staff, members of a planning council, potential subcontractors, and even the community at large about what Youth Participation is and how it differs from other youth initiatives. The National Commission on Resources for Youth (NCRY), a non-profit organization that has been promoting Youth Participation since 1967, can assume a major role in this educational process by supplying Primes with information and training materials. NCRY also maintains a clearinghouse with information about and contacts with over 1,500 Youth Participation programs. By drawing wisely on these and other resources, a Prime Sponsor can encourage those who are unfamiliar with Youth Participation to learn about it. Just as important, people who are experienced with Youth Participation will be motivated to come forward as resources. Of course, "displaying an interest" means more than doing lip service. Specific strategies Primes can use to generate enthusiasm for Youth Participation include:

1. *Provide examples of successful Youth Participation programs*. The strongest advocates for Youth Participation are people, including youth, who have experienced it. Many who are indifferent to abstract descriptions of Youth Participation but then observe it in action, soon realize that it not only works but is a life-changing experience for many young people. When drawing on NCRY's resources, observe how Youth Participation programs teach young people to assume responsibility, cooperate with others, and communicate well--the very qualities sought by most employers.

- *Responsibility. Employers want responsible workers; young people want opportunities to prove themselves. Youth Participation addresses both needs by requiring young people to take responsibility for a task, complete it, and be accountable for the results. Young people who learn about responsibility through experience rather than lectures often have a better self-image and are more likely to be reliable employees.*

- *Group activity. People who work well with others are valued highly by employers. Youth Participation gives young people the chance to collaborate with their peers and adults. In the process, they learn about cooperation, communication, and the satisfaction of sharing their tasks and accomplishments with others.*

- *Reflection. Work experience is only half the learning process. Young people also need opportunities to think about their experiences, so they can identify what they have learned and apply it in the future. In Youth Participation programs, young people are encouraged to reflect on their experiences in discussions, journals, and counseling sessions.*

- *Planning and decision-making. Adults are distinguished from children by their ability to make effective decisions for themselves and others. Youth Participation allows young people to "practice" decision-making by asking them to plan things ranging from the next day's activities to the next year's budget or program proposals.*

Many Prime Sponsors acknowledge the value of Youth Participation but doubt that such programs can be compatible with CETA regulations. These concerns are valid, but they should not stand as barriers to Youth Participation. Prime sponsors all over the country have already established successful Youth Participation programs within CETA guidelines.

2. *Include Youth Participation in project designs or Requests for Proposals.* One of the most direct ways to encourage Youth Participation is to put out an RFP that requires one or more elements of Youth Participation. For example, an RFP might specify one or more of the following elements:

- *Challenging tasks that benefit the wider community, i.e., providing health information, caring for the elderly.*
- *A variety of tasks so young people will have choices about what they will do and can change tasks during the course of the project.*
- *Opportunities for young people to plan the daily operations of the project including use of resources, assignments, scheduling, evaluation, and the like.*
- *Group activities so young people will have the experience of cooperating with peers and adults to accomplish a common goal.*
- *Provisions for an outcome or project such as a video-tape, a public presentation, a handbook, or a report. Young people should have control over the form and content of the product so they will have tangible evidence of their participation.*
- *Opportunities for regular reflection about the meaning and value of the experience either individually or in a group.*

In addition to the RFP, a Prime Sponsor can ask subcontractors to develop or revise program designs to incorporate these and other aspects of Youth Participation. Having such elements in the program proposal may not guarantee that the resulting project will include Youth Participation, but it does encourage subcontractors to upgrade the quality of their projects. Of course, it is impossible to impose Youth Participation on subcontractors who resist the idea. Those who oppose Youth Participation at the proposal stage are likely to sabotage it at the implementation stage. Whenever possible, win over skeptics with incentives and examples.

3. *Involve community organizations committed to Youth Participation.* Previous experience with Youth Participation is often the best guarantee of a program's success. Every city has a few programs or organizations that attract young people. Locate these programs and organizations by talking to young people, youth workers, ministers, educators, counselors, and others. After identifying such programs--often they are recognizable by the commitment and enthusiasm of young people--invite the sponsoring organization to apply for funds. By drawing into the CETA network organizations that have had experience with Youth Participation, a Prime Sponsor provides a resource for others who would like to develop Youth Participation programs.

4. *Seek out and involve strong adult leaders*. Because adults play such a pivotal role in Youth Participation, Primes should pay special attention to the selection and recruitment of project leaders. Look for people who exhibit a genuine concern for young people and empathy for their problems. Adult leaders should know that young people need independence and an opportunity to prove themselves. The adults should be skilled people who have knowledge to share with youth and the ability to supervise without dominating.

5. *Provide training for those who want to run Youth Participation programs*. Even before proposals are submitted, a Prime can meet with CBOs, LEAs, and Prime staff members to explain Youth Participation and how its elements can be incorporated into CETA proposals. To stimulate enthusiasm for Youth Participation, a Prime can use the films, booklets, and program examples, available from NCRY. After programs have been selected for funding, the Prime can continue to play a key role by providing practical training on implementation. NCRY can help Primes organize workshops run by experienced Youth Participation practitioners.

6. *Stress Youth Participation in evaluation and monitoring of subcontractor programs*. Prime Sponsors have frequent opportunities to monitor subcontractor programs, and each can be an occasion for reinforcing the principles of Youth Participation. Let subcontractors know that you will be looking for evidence of challenging tasks, responsible roles, reflection, and evaluation by young people. Train monitors to identify Youth Participation and include questions about Youth Participation on monitoring forms. Don't be discouraged if you don't find signs of Youth Participation at first. Use monitoring as an opportunity to explain and encourage Youth Participation. Send young people as well as staff members to assess work sites. When youth collaborate with program monitors, a Prime Sponsor demonstrates Youth Participation to subcontractors and also establishes a direct link with youth in the programs.

7. *Publicize successful Youth Participation projects*. When Prime Sponsors uncover successful Youth Participation programs, they can see to it that the young people and their adult leaders receive recognition by bringing their programs to the attention of city officials, planning bodies, and the press. Invite the young people to talk about their program at the seminars, workshops, and training sessions organized for other workers. Use them as a resource whenever possible. Youth Participation is contagious, and one good program often inspires others.

Obviously Youth Participation does require extra effort on the part of Prime Sponsors, subcontractors and young people themselves. The rewards, however, more than justify the effort. When people see that Youth Participation is a valued part of CETA, that youth really benefit from it, and that it can be done, programs will develop. With incentives, examples, and a genuine concern for youth, many Primes have made Youth Participation a reality.

II. FOUR CETA PROGRAMS THAT MADE YOUTH PARTICIPATION WORK

NCRY's files are filled with program descriptions illustrating how Youth Participation fits within CETA guidelines. The four programs described below involve young people in a wide range of work-related activities, yet each has integrated Youth Participation into its overall plan. Because Prime Sponsors often identify the same "trouble spots" when they consider Youth Participation, each of the descriptions pays special attention to four crucial issues:

Program Development. How can we involve young people in program planning and development when program designs must be completed and approved long before young people are selected?

Supervision. How can we be sure young people will be in the right place at the right time if we give them the freedom involved in Youth Participation?

Skill Training. Does Youth Participation equip young people with the skills they'll need to get and keep jobs?

Evaluation. How can you tell whether a Youth Participation program has been successful?

The adult leaders in these projects have answered all four questions with effective actions, attitudes, and leadership.

"FANTASTIC, AMAZING IDEAS" - YOUTH ACTION PROGRAM

Youth Action Program (YAP) is a multi-faceted Youth Participation project serving about one hundred young people in East Harlem, (a predominately Puerto Rican community in New York City). "YAP asks youth "What do you want to do? What would you like to change?" said one adult organizer. "Society assumes that young people don't want to do anything...but they have fantastic, amazing ideas." At YAP those ideas have been translated into seven CETA projects:

- *Hotline Cares is a telephone counseling and referral service in which young people handle crisis calls and often follow up with personal visits to provide additional service.*
- *Youth Action Restoration Crew is a sweat equity* project in which young men and women are renovating a four-story building that will be used as a community center.*
- *Johnson Youth Patrol has* stabilized the crime *rate in a housing project by making night patrols.*
- *Leadership School, developed and run by young people, provides alternative education in basic skills and community action for other young people who have dropped out of school.*
- *Young People's Block Association has taken responsibility for a vacant lot and has cleared away trash and painted a mural in preparation for converting it into a neighborhood park.*
- *Homes Away From Home creates "second homes" for young people who have run away or need to get away from home for various reasons.*
- *Youth Forum's 20 members promote awareness of issues relevant to the East Harlem community through speakouts, public meetings, and a monthly newsletter.*

---

*Sweat equity refers to a system in which people who invest their own time and energy in rehabilitating a building are then entitled to buy the building at nominal cost.

All seven projects grew out of the concerns of young people, and involve them in the planning as well as the execution of work. "We take young people very seriously," reported Dorothy Stoneman, Project Director. "We assume that every young person wants to make something of his or her life, and we provide a setting where they can do that."

Program Development. "There are several levels to program planning, and young people can be involved in more than one way," said Stoneman. "We ask each year's participants to read the proposals for next year's project and make suggestions based on their experience in the program." In the current projects, the staff develop broad goals and plans but involve young people in working out the specifics of what, when, and how things should be done.

Supervision. Each of YAP's projects has an adult organizer who is responsible for seeing that the young people are where they are supposed to be when they're supposed to be there. That person provides weekly documentation on attendance, accomplishments, and the like. "When young people are really involved in a project, they are less likely to have a 'get by' mentality. Supervisory problems seem to occur only when the kids are bored or hostile."

Employment Skills. YAP's goal is to enhance adolescent development on several fronts, one of which is employment preparation. "When we have young people who are clear about their employment goals, we involve them in a project where they can learn about very necessary things like promptness, reliability, planning, and carrying out agreements. Also, many of our young people become motivated to get more education."

Evaluation. YAP submits detailed information about the program to the Department of Labor including pre- and post-tests and interviews with every participant. "We are project, as well as process, oriented," said Stoneman, "because it's good for the young people to have something tangible to be proud of, and it proves to us that something specific has happened in the program." The staff hold weekly meetings for evaluation. Participants in each project meet weekly to discuss how the week went, complaints, and accomplishments. Representatives from each project also get together once a week to exchange information.

General. The staff at YAP uses CETA guidelines as a starting point and then goes on to incorporate other program components that meet their clients' developmental needs. "We understand that a good YEDPA project involves supervision and clear work assignments," said Stoneman, "but we also have a larger sense of what youth needs--things like delegation of responsibility so they are really in charge, a sense of where their work fits in the larger picture and who it matters to, the right to decide how best to do the work, the freedom from arbitrary authority, and work that expresses a collective commitment to a community."

"NOW I CAN DO IT ALL" - STUDENTS SERVING STUDENTS .

"Before, I didn't know how to do anything. Now I can do it all!" This kind of self-confidence is a by-product of the Students Serving Students (SSS) program, funded by CETA and operated by teachers within the St. Paul Public School system. SSS developed seven in-school centers, each of which created jobs for young people:

- *In the Promotion Department young people learned photography, layout, design, and graphic arts production methods, which they used to produce posters, brochures, and other promotional materials for community agencies.*
- *The Graphic Arts Center produced materials developed by the Promotion Center; students learned design, layout, and printing techniques.*
- *In Teenage Health Consultants young people were trained to counsel their peers on health problems, including sex and substance abuse.*
- *The Touring Theater did all the on-stage and off-stage work to produce plays and improvisations for younger children and for prisoners at the state penitentiary.*
- *Consumer Action Service operated an action line that researched and often resolved specific consumer problems and published booklets about consumer issues of importance to young people.*
- *In the Construction Center students learned basic carpentry skills and contracted for construction and repair jobs for the school and for low-income families.*
- *The Personnel Office administered all the projects, and students there kept records, prepared the payroll, handled registration, arbitrated disputes, and coordinated the activities of other centers.*

Although the centers were located in schools, student assignments and working conditions approximated those of a normal work site. "In each center, students had responsibilities and were expected to produce end products that had real-life usefulness," said Betty Lampland, Project Director. "At the same time, the staff could provide better supervision and

skills development than is usually available at job sites."

In addition to their own assignments, the young people learned about the other centers because they were often interdependent. For example, students in the Consumer Action Service wrote a book about recreational opportunities for the handicapped that was produced by the Graphic Arts Center and distributed by the Personnel Department.

All students in the St. Paul High Schools were eligible to participate in SSS. Because their on-site training included work on academic skills, such as reading and writing, the students received academic credit. Those who were eligible --about 50 percent--also received CETA payment for the three hours a day they spent at their work sites. Because of its elective status, the program mixed young people of all income levels and academic backgrounds. Some were highly motivated, and some were simply dumped in the program as a last resort.

Program Development. Although the general program structure was established before students entered it, they were encouraged to take responsibility for the specific projects undertaken by each center. "The staff was especially sensitive about giving the young people as much responsibility as possible," said Lampland. "For example, the Personnel Center developed the rules about how late someone could be before his or her pay was docked. And the students in the Graphic Arts Center were allowed to charge supplies to a program account. We were constantly looking for new ways to put students in charge."

Supervision. Some of the record-keeping involved time cards, and the payroll was done by students themselves. "Adults, however, had the major responsibility for seeing to it that students were where they were supposed to be," reported Lampland. "This is the toughest part of a program like this. You want the kids to have as much freedom as possible, but that doesn't mean the adults can avoid the responsibility of checking up on them. When we did have a problem with someone being absent or something, we usually referred it to the Personnel Committee, which would interview the person and handle the problem much as a personnel department would in the working world."

Employment Skills. The SSS program worked to develop two kinds of skills in its participants. "First we wanted to give them the skills needed to do the task--carpentry, photography, typing, whatever," said Lampland. "Then we wanted to give them a high level of skills that could be transferred to any job--that includes confidence, the ability to deal with people in a businesslike way, the ability to identify work and follow through with it."

Evaluation. The SSS project was evaluated with standarized tests, questionnaires, interviews, and on-site observation. There was an especially dramatic rise in the scores on a test designed to measure self-esteem. Although the SSS program did not attempt to place students in jobs, a follow-

up questionnaire indicated that many students had gained enough self-confidence and initiative to be able to get jobs on their own.

General. SSS was a demonstration project that ended when the demonstration was over. However, parts of the project continued without CETA funding. SSS is an excellent model for LEA-based projects that include Youth Participation in their design. As Betty Lampland put it,"The CETA regulations never got in the way of Youth Participation."

"CONNECTING WITH THE OUTSIDE WORLD"-BARTRAM SCHOOL FOR HUMAN SERVICES

By law, Prime Sponsors must allocate almost a quarter of their CETA funds to LEAs. Many Primes feel that they have minimal control over the money that goes to schools, yet often they can encourage Youth Participation by directing funds to schools that already have experimental programs.

The Bartram School for Human Services is a branch of Bartram High School in Philadelphia. Established in 1972, the program was designed both to help students explore careers in human service and to meet the community's need for trained human service professionals. Students opt to join the program in their sophomore year. Thereafter, their time is divided between classes and community placements. Fifty-eight community agencies participate in the program, so young people can choose placements in hospitals, day care centers, social service centers, and other agencies. Class work is specially planned to complement students' work experiences. Math, for example, is approached from a consumer's point of view.

The Bartram School meets all the criteria for Youth Participation and for CETA, so the local Prime Sponsor arranged for the school to have CETA slots, a higher percentage than it would ordinarily be entitled to. "We didn't really have to change our program to qualify for CETA funding," said Arthur Burdett, Program Director. "Our focus has always been career exposure. We want our students to have inside knowledge of the human services, the jobs that are available, and the requirements for getting those jobs."

To help students benefit the most from their job placements, they meet once a week for a seminar to discuss the problems and progress of the previous week. "We do a lot of role-playing and assertiveness training," said Burdett, "and the group work is supplemented by individual conferences."

Supervision. At the beginning, supervision was a problem because students didn't show up at their placements. The school hired a special coordinator who worked to educate employers about the needs of students and to make better matches between students' interests and placements. Today the school has an 85 percent attendance rate--considerably higher than the school system as a whole. In addition, said Burdett, "Staff members visit each site once every two or three weeks. We talk both to the supervisor and to the students so we can find out just what a student does and how it's going."

Program Development. Although the program at Bartram is well-defined, students have a great deal of autonomy in selecting their placements. "We set a limit on the number of placements a student can have in a year," reported Burdett, "but that's the only limit. Once a student takes an assignment, we provide a supportive climate. And we encourage each student to develop an agenda of things he or she wants to do during the placement." Students present their agendas to the employer and negotiate to develop a job that meets employer needs and allows a student an opportunity to do challenging and meaningful work.

Employment Skills. The classes Bartram students attend are designed to teach them specific skills they will need on their jobs. "Students spend a lot of time learning skills," said Burdett. "Students working in a medical center might learn CPR or first aid; students at a day care center might learn about child development." In addition, seniors in the program take a ten-week job-finding course. As part of it, the staff helps each student evaluate the experiences he or she has had and translate them into a resume.

Evaluation. "Students from Bartram have working knowledge of the human services, so larger numbers of them move into these fields," said Burdett. So far, 40 percent of the school's graduates have gone on to college, and 35 percent have gone on to careers in the human services. In addition, students' self-concepts, as measured by the Semantic Differential Test, have improved dramatically.

"DEVELOPING A SENSE OF ACCOUNTABILITY" - LOOKING GLASS COMMUNITY IMPROVEMENT PROJECT

Landscape design and carpentry were the specialities of the young people at the Looking Glass Community Improvement Project (CIP) in Eugene, Oregon. Participants did light construction and landscape work for non-profit agencies in their rural community. The young people evaluated each work request and drew up a list of necessary labor and materials. CETA funds paid for training and labor; the agencies paid for materials. During the course of the program, the young people remodeled a child care center with the assistance of a professional architect, worked alongside union members to construct a swimming pool for the Easter Seal Society, and re-modeled a 20-unit motel for emergency housing for low-income families.

The 16 participants were divided into four crews, each managed by a lead worker. The crews were responsible for organizing their own work schedules. Lead workers, young people who had been promoted as a result of good work performance and leadership potential, had extra responsibilities such as keeping an inventory of equipment and estimating the cost of work to be done.

Once a week, youth and adults held a staff meeting, during which they discussed program policies as well as the feelings young people had about what they were doing. One day a week was set aside for training. In the morning adult staff taught young people specific skills related to their work; in the afternoon a guest speaker gave a presentation on a work-related topic such as sexism in the workplace or interpersonal communication.

Program Development. Young people had day-to-day responsibility for decisions about the sequence of jobs, the number of people on a job, and so on, reported Program Director Don Freeman. "In addition, crew members got involved in hiring adult staff and could work on committees dealing with personnel policy, grant writing, and evaluation." The Program Director made decisions affecting the overall program, but he regularly solicited comments and advice from the young people. Also, he recalled, "I made it clear when the decision was theirs and when it was mine."

Supervision. Everyday the crews met and returned to a central garage so they could sign in and out. "Our adult supervisors were responsible for two crews," said Freeman, "so they moved back and forth between them during the day. We expected lead workers to take responsibility for their

crews when the adult supervisor wasn't around, and they did."

Skills. The adults involved were themselves experienced in landscaping and carpentry. Although they gave some classes, most of the time the young people learned by doing. "The adult staff member would demonstrate the skill to be used before going out," said Freeman. "Then the crews would go to the work site and do the job with the help of the supervisor. At the end of the day, we'd have a sort of debriefing so they could discuss problems or express a need for more training in a particular area." By the end of the program, most of the participants had first-year skills in construction or landscaping.

Evaluation. The CIP program was the first of its kind in Lane County so it was evaluated from many different perspectives. "We had a university student who did an ongoing evaluation," recalls Freeman. "The staff members evaluated the young people, and the young people evaluated the staff, their work crews, their jobs, and themselves. Each agency that we worked for evaluated us, and we had professionals evaluate each job when it was completed."

General. "I think this program worked as well as it did," commented Freeman, "because we set it up to be a private business that delivered real services to customers. That created a feeling of accountability in the young people. They took it all very seriously."

III. MORE IDEAS

Each of the programs just described worked within CETA guidelines to provide young people with valuable Youth Participation experiences. Other organizations have, of course, devised other strategies for combining and incorporating Youth Participation into CETA programs. A smorgasbord of ideas, drawn from the Commission's Clearinghouse files, shows what youth can do and how Youth Participation programs can be organized to meet specific CETA requirements. The programs are organized under five headings for easy reference:

- *Program Development and Decision-Making by Youth*
- *Supervision and Youth Responsibility*
- *Preparation for Employment: Skills and Contracts*
- *Preparation for Employment: Attitudes and Aptitudes*
- *Special Programs for Special People.*

More detailed information on all these programs is available from NCRY.

PROGRAM DEVELOPMENT AND DECISION-MAKING BY YOUTH

Letting young people make decisions about what they will do in a Youth Participation program can be unsettling, yet it is essential if young people are to learn the responsibility and self-management that will be expected from them on a job. As the following projects show, decision-making by young people need not result in chaos. Adults can delegate specific, challenging tasks to young people. Most youth want a chance to prove themselves, and they respond responsibly once they realize that a decision is really theirs and they will be held accountable for its results.

A YOUTH COUNCIL THAT REALLY WORKS

The Youth Councils mandated by the CETA legislation have had two major problems. First, young people don't participate, either because they don't come to meetings or because they come and are intimidated into silence by the adults. Second, since the Youth Councils frequently have no real power, they are often ignored. In Tacoma, Washington, the Prime Sponsor dealt with these problems by setting up a Youth Employment Center staffed by 14 adults and eight young people. All eight young people--a larger number than usual--are members of the Youth Council. The young people are paid for the meeting time, and they go as a group directly to the Council meetings, so transportation is not a problem. Because they represent a sizable block at meetings, they are less reluctant to speak up; and because they work with other young people, they have a strong sense of their needs and concerns.

The Tacoma Youth Council also has a specific and respected function, which is to evaluate programs run by subcontractors. An adult and a young person team up to review a project's proposal, visit the work site, and interview the participants. Then they write a report based on their findings. In one project, for example, both the youth and the adult observer concluded that although the proposal had included a decision-making role for young people, youth placed there were really functioning only as workers. Recommendations for improving programs were given to the project operators so they could incorporate appropriate changes into their funding proposals for the following year. Since the reports do have an effect on project design and operations, the young people have a genuine feeling of doing work that makes a difference.

The trouble with the way most Youth Council participation is conceived is that it is treated as an isolated activity. Youth are expected to find meaning and motivation in meeting with adults in a vague role as "representatives" of a lot of young people they have never met. Youth Council participation becomes far more real when it is an adjunct to a more concrete activity. In Tacoma, this activity is the youths' staff work at the employment center, where they do in-take interviews and referrals, administer questionnaires, run a "rent-a-kid" program for 14-15 year-olds, and do graphics and publicity work for the Prime Sponsor. This work gives them a perspective and expertise in the city's youth employment programs that makes them much more effective and confident as representatives of youth.*

WHAT DO YOUTH NEED: LET YOUTH FIND OUT

In the Youth Community Action program in Lawrence, NY, 12 to 15 CETA-paid youth work as youth organizers. They receive six weeks of intensive training in group process, communications, survey skills, and political systems. The organizers then survey youth needs in their community and devise programs to meet them. Among other projects, youth have organized a community-wide carnival, an energy conference for youth, and an annual Thanksgiving dinner for senior citizens. Once a program is planned, the youth organizers recruit neighborhood young people as participants. Although many of the young people enter the program as trouble-makers, most find that the project "makes you take hold of yourself" because, as one participant put it, "you realize you can do better things."

YOUNG PEOPLE PLAN THEIR OWN PROJECTS

Youthworks, a demonstration project in Chemung County, NY was based on the premise that young people "are capable of planning and implementing their own projects." Young people in the program came from rural and urban settings, so they were organized into groups according to their geographic location. An adult advisor assisted each group in brainstorming for possible services and/or businesses that might fill needs in their communities. Then the young people surveyed community residents to find out which of their ideas generated the most interest. After going through a brief accounting course, the young people planned a budget and developed a proposal to present to their peers. Once the proposals were approved, the young people put their projects into effect. Successful projects have included a used clothing store that became self-sufficient, a tutoring program, a sandwich shop, and a rural community newsletter. "Not everything worked," said the Director, "but even the projects that failed taught the kids a lot about how business works."

---

*Documentation and evaluation of youth employment programs is another important and useful activity that young people can do to give meaning to their participation on a Youth Council. See NCRY's manual for training to carry out this function, Youth Participation in Documenting CETA Youth Programs.

MEETING EMPLOYER EXPECTATIONS

CETA legislation mandates "quality" work experiences for young people, yet the nature of work is often directly controlled by the employer. To make employers and young people aware of each other's needs, the Youth Council in Boulder, Colorado, set up negotiation sessions. Young people and employers who agreed to participate--mostly public service employment representatives--brainstormed lists of requirements for a "good" job placement. Then each group appointed three negotiators who met to discuss and evaluate the needs designated. In the negotiating process, both young people and employers learned where they agreed and disagreed on the definition of a good job. This created a great deal more understanding on both sides.

WHAT DO YOU REALLY KNOW ABOUT THE NEEDS OF YOUTH?

Many Prime Sponsors simply do not know much about the employment needs of young people. In New York State the Governor's Commission on Employment and Training commissioned the Community Service Society (CSS) to solve this problem. CSS in turn trained 150 young people to survey their peers by asking about employment experiences, attitudes, training, and goals. The interviewers were paid to attend a 13-hour training seminar where they learned about existing programs for youth, analyzed the questions on the survey, role-played interview situations, and learned to code their data for a computer. The young people turned out to be first-rate interviewers, in part because they had immediate rapport with the youth they interviewed. The survey produced detailed information about the employment needs of 2,500 young people, including many hard-to-document youth such as drop-outs and minorities. "I learned a lot from the youngsters," said the Director. "The young people learned a lot too. Most improved interpersonal skills, learned basic work habits, and became more proficient readers and writers."

YOUTH AS EMPLOYMENT COUNSELORS

Some Primes have a general sense of what youth need but find it difficult to provide individual employment counseling. In Chicago, the Jane Addams Center has trained five young people to staff a Job Readiness Program. The young people counsel other youth, talk to them about possible careers and use audio-visual equipment to practice interview skills. They also develop contacts with potential employers, keep files of community resources so they can refer clients when necessary, and produce a bi-monthly newsletter about services for youth. They continue to be available to youth who have been placed in jobs, thus providing ongoing support.

SUPERVISION AND YOUTH RESPONSIBILITY

Supervision is an inevitable preoccupation for Prime Sponsors. Certainly, young people who are being paid to do jobs must be at work on time and work hard. Yet supervision need not mean heavy-handed authority imposed by adults. As the following projects show, the goal of Youth Participation is to have young people willingly accept responsibility for being on time and following through on commitments.

SINGLE SITE SUPERVISION

Aunt Martha's is a multi-service agency in Park Forest, Illinois, where over 60 young people work on the premises at a health center, a theater, a retail shop selling crafts, a woodshop, and a drop-in center. How does the staff keep track of everyone? First, they try to assign young people to centers where the work really interests them, on the assumption that they will be more likely to take their work seriously. Second, each supervisor establishes his or her own attendance policies, but all include some sort of sign-in/sign-out procedure. Youth work 35 hours a week and are paid every two weeks for 70 hours. If a youth's hours drop below 65 without a legitimate excuse such as sickness, he or she receives a written warning. The second time the hours drop below 65, the youth must attend an adverse action hearing, which may result in termination. "We don't have to fall back on hearings very often," reported one staff member. "We find that if you give kids responsibility for meaningful work, most take it and behave responsibly."

MULTI-SITE SUPERVISION

In some Youth Participation projects, young people work at various sites in the community, making supervision more complex but no less critical. In Westport, Connecticut, for example, young people in a Youth Community Conservation and Improvement Project (YCCIP) program worked on three projects at three locations. In one, they mapped the city's drainage system so flooding that polluted a local stream could be prevented. In a second, they marked the boundaries of tidal wetlands so nearby construction wouldn't encroach on the protected environment. In a third, they developed a wildlife preserve along a local stream. Each crew had an adult supervisor who was on the work site at all times and a student supervisor who served for a one-month term.

The student supervisor had additional responsibility for quality control, made job assignments, and organized the day's work. Students met for work at the local youth center where

they signed in on time cards. They were then transported as a group to the work site. At the end of the day, they returned to the youth center to store equipment and sign out. Before students enrolled in the program, they went through an orientation session that explained the work and its requirements. The staff enforced strict attendance policies. More than one unexcused absence in a single month meant a student would be terminated.

WORK SO CHALLENGING THE YOUTH DO OVERTIME FOR FREE

Sometimes supervision becomes a problem in youth programs because, as the young people put it, "There's nothing to do." This is rarely a complaint in Youth Participation programs where young people take on challenging tasks with observable results. For instance, the young people in Project Enrichment, in rural Connecticut, often take their work home with them. In this summer program, teenagers spend four hours a day tutoring elementary school children who have academic problems. The students plan their own lessons and often design special teaching materials such as posters and games. As one student said, "There's something different to do each day." The young people often put in extra unpaid time because they feel responsible for the academic progress of their tutees. They also assume extra responsibility for planning plays, recreation, and field trips to supplement their teaching activities.

WHO MAKES THE RULES?

Often young people are more willing to accept supervision when their peers have had a part in establishing the rules. Students at the Enfield High School in Connecticut set many of the policies of their Social Science Lab. The Lab, a resource for the school and the community, is staffed by 27 students who develop film, maintain equipment, train those who wish to use it, and produce audio-visual materials for school classes and community groups ranging from the Fire Marshall to the Chamber of Commerce. Young people who wish to use the Lab's equipment to produce their own films or slide shows must submit a proposal to the youth staff. If the proposal shows sufficient commitment, staff members and project participants draw up a contract specifying completion dates for research, storyboards, production, and so on. The young people themselves acknowledge the need for standards of accountability, and the student charter calls for a "tough," disciplined, and soundly structured organization." Thanks to student acceptance of those standards, the Lab has been enormously successful and has produced hundreds of media presentations. Despite the easy access, equipment has never been stolen, perhaps because the young people understand that the Lab is really theirs and are unwilling to jeopardize it in any way.

THE IMPORTANCE OF VISIBLE GOALS

A tangible product often minimizes the need for supervision because young people take more responsibility for their own direction when they are working towards a clearly achievable goal, such as a handbook, report, video-tape, or slide presentation. This observation is confirmed by, among others,

a project in the Flatbush section of Brooklyn, New York. There, CETA-employed young people interviewed residents of their interracial community and wrote a book called Flatbush from a Youth Perspective. Many of the young people had to struggle with their writing skills and overcome their personal shyness, yet they kept at it until, as one student put it, "We felt like we accomplished something."

PREPARATION FOR EMPLOYMENT: SKILLS AND CONTACT

The purpose of CETA's youth programs is, of course, to help disadvantaged youth become employable in unsubsidized jobs. Studies for the Department of Labor indicate that employers are more concerned with qualities such as reliability than with specific skills and prefer to do their own training so employees will be able to meet their particular needs. Nonetheless, many Youth Participation projects do teach young people skills that will qualify them for specific jobs.

TRAINING TOMORROW'S ENTREPRENEURS

In the Youth Entrepreneurship Project in San Diego, young people created four small businesses: flower vending, food vending, T-shirt silkscreening, and home services. The young people did market research and feasibility studies before selecting and organizing their staffs. They take responsibility for management, finances, sales, and marketing. In the process, they see firsthand the role small businesses can play in the economic development of urban communities, and they develop skills as entrepreneurs.

PROVIDING THE KNOWLEDGE THAT UNDERLIES GOOD JOBS

Tree, Inc., is a California project in which 27 young people studied forestry and then applied their knowledge to the restoration of a woodland area. In-class training on ecosystems, resource planning, and fire control was supplemented with remedial help in reading and writing as students required them. They put their newly learned skills to work doing reforestation, trail maintenance, endangered plants salvation, and seed collection. Because of the combination of training and practical experience, many of the young people obtained jobs when they left the program. Six participants even set up their own tree planting service and planted over a quarter of a million trees in their first year.

BREAKING DOWN SEX STEREOTYPES

Research indicates that most young people do not explore nontraditional occupations without active encouragement. Project Phoenix, a CETA program operated simultaneously in Denver, Salt Lake City, and Las Vegas, was a deliberate attempt to expose young people, particularly women, to nontraditional work opportunities. The program was divided into three segments. The first included discussions of sex stereotyping, practice in interpersonal communication, and contact with nontraditional workers and work sites. In the second part, young women became apprentices in nontraditional jobs, particularly in carpentry and alternative energy development. In

the final part, students produced a questionnaire to evaluate sex stereotyping in the schools, wrote a handbook on how to replicate their program, and planned a conference to expose junior high students to nontraditional work possibilities.

TEACHING HOMETOWN SURVIVAL SKILLS

In many parts of the country, young people need to become aware of job prospects in their own communities. SALT, Inc., a CETA project housed in a renovated boathouse, helps young people learn skills that will allow them to earn their livings on the coast of Maine where jobs are few and specialized. Reflecting the local economy, the program exposes young people to fishing, farming, boat-building, construction, carpentry, communications and crafts. They are encouraged to explore careers that interest them by interviewing community resource people and by participating in on-site projects such as Salt magazine, which documents the local maritime culture, or boat-building. In addition, each participant produces a report, video-tape, or other presentation describing what he or she learned about the occupations studied.

TRYING ON MANY ROLES

Most people need to experiment with a variety of career possibilities before finding the one that's right for them. Youth Participation programs often give young people an opportunity to "try on" several working roles. At Project 79 in Miami, Florida, Hispanic young people assist the producers of Miami's only Spanish language public television program. They first learned the entire range of television production skills: editing, audio, camera work, lighting, directing, research, and graphics. They then go to work for "Foro 17," a daily talk show. The students rotate jobs and learn quickly because mistakes are so conspicuous on television. So far, they have independently produced several documentaries, including ones on drugs and the draft. Because these young people are exposed to all the jobs in television, they leave the program with a strong sense of the jobs available as well as the skills needed to qualify for them.

MAKING CONTACTS FOR THE FUTURE

Youth Participation projects require collaboration with adults, and the contacts young people make can often lead to employment. In the Teen Peer Education Project in Berkeley, California, high school students study health information ranging from basic anatomy to birth control. They also learn to recognize problems such as drug abuse, to counsel their peers, and make referrals to appropriate community service agencies. After an intensive training program, they plan information programs and provide one-to-one counseling for the Children's Hospital, school recreation centers, the Family Planning Center, and drop-in clinics. In each setting they work with adult staff members. The contacts have shown them that "health care doesn't just mean doctors and nurses." Many go on to study health care in college. Those who do seek such jobs find that Teen Peer Education provides them with what one participant called a "built-in resume" and excellent contacts.

PREPARATION FOR EMPLOYMENT: ATTITUDES AND APTITUDES

Important as it may be to teach young people the skills peculiar to specific careers, it is just as necessary for them to learn the attitudes and behavior patterns that will help them get and keep jobs in any field. When employers were asked to describe the characteristics of a good employee, invariably they emphasized dependability, responsibility, ability to follow instructions, good work quality, ability to work with others, and punctuality. Perhaps the greatest value of Youth Participation is that it teaches young people the very qualities that are sought by employers.

LEARNING TO MAKE DECISIONS

Good work quality means, in part, recognizing what needs to be done and figuring out the best way to do it. Young people in Salem, Massachusetts, are learning to do that through the Salem Youth Council. Like many other American towns, Salem has a serious problem with drug and alcohol abuse among teenagers. The goal of the Council is to make young people and adults aware of the problem. After several weeks of training, the young people plan their own projects for educating the community about substance abuse and its prevention. Among other things, the group has produced a slide-tape presentation about substance abuse, given presentations for numerous community groups, and produced a newsletter on substance abuse.

ADULTS AS COLLEAGUES

Many young people are uncomfortable working side by side with adults because they have had little contact with adults other than parents and teachers. Youth Participation programs draw young people into collegial relationships in which adults are co-workers in addition to authority figures. At the Food Advisory Service (FAS) outside San Francisco, young people and adults work together to supply inexpensive food to the elderly in five nearby counties. The young people, many of whom are ex-offenders, inventory, package, and deliver food to 81 distribution centers. The relationship between youth and adult staff is characterized by mutual respect, largely because the young people know that they are likely to be promoted as soon as they demonstrate responsibility and competence. "We make it clear that age, ethnicity, and past history are not significant," commented the director. "At FAS, distinction lies only in a person's ability to contribute to the job and help fellow workers." Many of the young people also form positive relationships with the senior citizens they serve.

TIME TO THINK

All CETA programs expose young people to the world of work, yet they often have confused and conflicting feelings about their first work experiences. In Youth Participation programs, they are given opportunities to sort out their feelings with their peers, often in a weekly seminar. In the Supportive Office Services program in Gary, Indiana, young people learn office skills and then form a temporary placement service so they can take short-term assignments in a variety of office settings. While on the job, they meet once a week with adult staff members to discuss problems and progress. "We start by asking the temporaries what they did on their jobs, what decisions they had to make, and how they felt about their work," reported the project director. In one session, students discussed how they would feel and respond if they were asked to make coffee on the job. The seminars help them clarify their feelings about work and develop solutions to problems that might otherwise fester.

CONNECTING WITH THE LARGER COMMUNITY

One source of worker satisfaction is the sense that the job has importance and meaning in the larger society. Young people often discover this link through Youth Participation. A Chicago program called Community TV Network "provides young people with an opportunity to reflect on their work and who they are in relation to others in society." After learning to use video equipment, the youth explore political issues and document the cultural life of their communities. They have produced video-tapes on various issues, such as teen pregnancy, which then became tools for community awareness and action. Looking at their communities through a video camera has made them more aware of how their lives intersect with those of others. "Before, my community was just my family and friends," said one participant. "Now I see the world around me; I know you can make a difference."

SPECIAL PROGRAMS FOR SPECIAL PEOPLE

The National Commission on Resources for Youth believes all young people can benefit from Youth Participation because all need an opportunity to prove themselves by doing work that makes a difference to the people around them.

HIGH RISK YOUTH

Adolescents who have been in trouble with the law are difficult clients for any program, yet Youth Participation programs run by experienced, caring adults can often turn these young people around. In Berkeley, California, for example, the Youth Alternatives Program takes referrals from the police and courts. The young people are interviewed by the staff at a crisis center, stay at the program's foster home, and then become involved in on-going programs such as a recycling center, a printing office, and a counseling program. "Before I got this job I was a troublemaker," said one participant. "Now, working here takes up all my time. All of a sudden I've got responsibilities. I've got to come through."

DROP-OUTS

"They've realized they could do something productive without stealing," is how the director of the Salt Lake Urban Conservation and Improvement Corps described the effect of his program on the 30 young people who were involved in it. The young people construct and install solar equipment for low-income homes. Students receive training in tool use, construction, drafting, and energy theory. They have put their new skills to use remodeling a senior center and giving seminars on solar energy. Many who have completed the program have gone on to get jobs in construction and solar technology.

HANDICAPPED

Handicapped young people often have an urgent need to see themselves as contributing members of their communities. NCRY has documented many projects that provide just that experience. In Milford, Connecticut, handicapped youngsters have restored vandalized property and removed architectural barriers by building ramps, installing handrails in restrooms, and designating special parking areas. The young people learn construction skills from carefully selected tradespeople, and they meet once a week to share their problems and achievements. In the Urban Arts Project in Deafness in Massachusetts, hearing and hearing-impaired young people work together to put on plays and art exhibits. As one staff member explained, "The hearing and hearing-impaired teach each other to communicate. They learn together and, as they discover each

other, they discover themselves and their potential for productivity and contribution."

YOUNG WOMEN

Adolescent women may face special problems, particularly if they are pregnant or unwed mothers. One group of young women in Salem, Massachusetts, confronted these problems by writing two booklets, one about adolescent sexuality and one about pregnancy. Of the seven members of the Book Project, two were mothers and one was pregnant. The women chose their own topic and learned interviewing techniques so they could talk to their peers about their feelings and to professionals about issues such as nutrition during pregnancy and birth control. After doing their research, the young women wrote, edited, laid out, typed, and illustrated their booklets. Frank and informative, they were well-received by the community.

BILINGUAL YOUTH

Youth Participation can give some young people the courage to break the pattern of poverty. In Washington State, young people from migrant worker families help run a local radio station called Radio Cadena. In the early stages of the program, they spend half a day studying English, reading, and writing. The other half day is spent learning about radio production and news reporting. After the training, some of the young people take responsibility for technical functions at the station, learning to splice tape, run the control board, and produce programming. Others become reporters, covering local government and issues of importance to Hispanics and farm workers. Through the year-long program, many young people have gained enough confidence to look for and find non-farm work jobs.

IV. MONITORING, EVALUATION AND ASSESSMENT

In addition to the assessment tools for CETA programs provided by the government, some Prime Sponsors have had good results incorporating Youth Participation into the evaluation process. Young people can be involved both in assessing their own progress and in evaluating the effectiveness of the project as a whole.*

The advantages of bringing young people into the assessment process are numerous. First, the Prime Sponsor obtains direct feedback from program participants. This is an obvious but often overlooked source of information. Program participants know what the problems are and can be insightful about how to correct them if they believe that their recommendations will be taken seriously.

Aside from the benefits for Prime Sponsors, involving young people in evaluation has tremendous benefits for them. First, many forms of evaluation improve participants' communications skills. Second, by reflecting on their experiences, young people perceive what they have learned. Third, when they are responsible for assessing their progress and their program, they gain a sense of internal control. This is especially important for disadvantaged youth who often feel that their futures are determined by external forces.

Evaluation can take place in many ways. It can be private or public. It can be directed at the progress of individuals or the effectiveness of programs as a whole. The key point is that, like other forms of Youth Participation, evaluation must be treated as meaningful work that makes a difference. The decisions and judgments of the young people must be taken seriously by significant adults.

NCRY has collected many examples of effective evaluation techniques. Those described below can be used singly or in combination as part of the overall evaluation of CETA programs for young people.

---

* NCRY has produced two practical manuals that relate to this topic. Thinking About the Work Experience: A Manual for Learning and Reflection in Youth Employment Programs tells how to involve young people in assessing their own progress and project. Youth Participation in Documenting CETA Youth Programs deals with giving young people roles in assessing other youth programs.

- *Journals. One of the simplest forms of self-evaluation, a journal can be a powerful tool for recording and analyzing personal experience. In some programs, journals are entirely private; in others, they are shared with counselors or small groups of students. In either case, young people often need help starting a journal. Project leaders can suggest specific topics such as the best (or worst) work experience of the week or on-the-job conflicts and how they could be resolved.*

- *Reports. While a journal is essentially a private document, a report is a public account of what happened on the job. Young people often find it satisfying to write a weekly summary of their work just as they might do on a regular job. Reports can be written individually or in small groups. They should cover what was accomplished during the past week, what went well, what problems arose, and what is planned for the week to follow. Reports can also cover the results of other activities described below.*

- *Counseling Sessions. All CETA participants meet one-to-one with a counselor, and such sessions can encourage self-evaluation. Instead of using these meetings merely to present students with information gathered from tests, supervisors, and other external sources, the counselor can prompt students to make their own judgments about what skills or experiences they need to become what they want to be.*

- *Peer Counseling. Young people often meet in groups to discuss their progress in CETA placements. These sessions range from staff meetings, which concentrate only on the business at hand, to rap groups, which explore the feelings and inner conflicts sparked by work. Sensitively led, young people can learn to counsel each other in group settings. Together, they can often work through problems that they are unable to approach individually and unwilling to share with adults.*

- *How-To Materials. Young people can often produce handbooks, "tip sheets," or even training films that can be used by adult leaders and future participants in a program. To prepare such materials, they must examine their own experiences so they*

can explain how to avoid mistakes and duplicate successes.

- *Presentations. In many Youth Participation projects, young people develop presentations using films, photographs, video-tapes, charts, and written materials. Sometimes their presentations are intended to educate other young people or the public; other times they are designed to influence government bodies or those who run youth programs.*

- *Evaluation Instruments. With proper training, young people can learn to use traditional evaluation devices such as interviews, questionnaires, and surveys. In some cases, young people have designed their own instruments, done research, tabulated the results, and prepared sophisticated reports based on their data.*

- *Benchmarks. A benchmark is a measurable level of achievement. By establishing benchmarks related to a youth's overall employability, Youth Participation programs can provide young people with a simple way of evaluating their progress. Limited, achievable objectives can be developed in discussion with adults. Young people can help judge when they have been successful and identify what they need to do to meet their goals.*

No Youth Participation project can employ all these evaluation tools, yet each will reinforce the idea that young people are responsible and capable.

V. TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE FOR YOUTH PARTICIPATION

This handbook illustrates how Youth Participation can be a viable strategy for using employment programs to meet the broader developmental needs of youth while increasing their employability. In responding to the Youth Participation mandate under YEDPA, Prime Sponsors have sought to become better informed about its meaning and application. Many have contacted the National Commission on Resources for Youth, which has identified numerous models of youth employment programs that incorporate Youth Participation. NCRY is now able to offer technical assistance to Prime Sponsors who wish to expand Youth Participation in their employment programs.

YOUTH PARTICIPATION IS HARD TO DO

In light of the mandate to provide youth with more meaningful roles in their employment programs, and in society through their programs, many Prime Sponsors have attempted to increase Youth Participation. Many efforts have been successful, and Prime Sponsors have expressed amazement at the gains youth have made, not only in self-confidence and attitudes toward work, but also in job and employability skills. By the same token, many Prime Sponsors have been frustrated in their efforts to expand Youth Participation. Even those that have been successful speak of the struggle to do it effectively.

Several reasons may be offered for the problems encountered. Most youth-serving agencies, whether they are schools, CBOs, or CETA youth offices, are geared to youth as clients, not participants. Similarly, youth themselves have had little experience in making decisions or carrying responsibility--which is the very reason why it is so important that they begin. Because of inexperience, youth may need to develop both skills and motivation for participation.

Another reason for the problems is that many Prime Sponsors are unaware of the scope of the options for Youth Participation. As has been described, CETA youth can assume responsible roles in a wide range of activities, whether making decisions affecting their programs or carrying out projects that meet real community needs.

A third reason is that, although Youth Participation in its many forms has been done effectively for years in a great diversity of settings, CETA youth workers have had few opportunities to benefit from others' experiences. Youth Participation is hard to do without the needed resources and support.

NCRY's Technical Assistance Project is designed to reduce these problems. It bases its resources on the concrete experiences of numerous people and programs that have actually practiced Youth Participation. The technical assistance itself aims to transfer the knowledge and skills that are necessary to plan and implement effective Youth Participation.

NCRY's TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE

NCRY's technical assistance is based on the assumption that, to work, a new project must be adapted to the specific setting where it will operate. This means that local personnel who will be responsible for administering, implementing, and operating the project must have a significant role in planning and developing it. Both experience and research on innovative programs have shown that participation in the process that determines a program's final form is critical for it to take root and become effective.

Fortunately, Youth Participation is highly adaptable, lending itself to a multiplicity of settings, structures, and levels and to the on-site developmental process. This flexibility notwithstanding, NCRY can be quite specific regarding the particular focus of Youth Participation. NCRY offers assistance to increase Youth Participation in such areas as project evaluation, housing rehabilitation, peer counseling, and community service, yet insures that Prime Sponsors will be able to tailor these to their own local needs and conditions.

In responding to requests for technical assistance, NCRY calls on a nationwide network of field associates. Trained by NCRY, many of these professionals are specialists in particular types of Youth Participation, often having done it themselves. In addition, their geographic proximity to the sites where they offer assistance increases their ability to understand local conditions.

WHAT YOUTH CAN DO:
TYPES OF YOUTH PARTICIPATION

If you are an employment and training youth director, planner, or program operator, NCRY can help you to introduce, expand, or improve Youth Participation in a broad range of program areas. Each type is flexible, making it possible to adapt it to your own setting. You may want to start a new project with one of these as the focus--for example, a project in youth-tutoring-youth or energy conservation. Or you may want to strengthen Youth Participation as a component of a project by involving youth in project decision making or in a seminar or education component. The following list summarizes a catalogue of technical assistance offerings that are available from NCRY:*

Planning for Youth Participation
Youth Participation in project decision making
Youth Participation in project documentation
Youth councils
Peer counseling
Seminar or group meeting
Youth tutoring youth
Mentorships
Youth operated business
Youth operated employment service
Construction and community improvement
Energy projects
Environmental action
Urban resources
Community services
Day care
Consumer action
Health information and services
Media production
Community surveys and research
Museum projects
Archeology projects
Recreation for young children
Legal rights

---

* Technical Assistance for Youth Participation in Youth Employment Programs: A Catalogue for CETA Youth Directors

WHAT NCRY WILL DO:
TYPES OF TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE

For each type of Youth Participation, NCRY offers a standard sequence of assistance. It begins when NCRY is first contacted and continues to a point mutually agreed upon by it and the Prime Sponsor. Resources include model program descriptions, planning and implementation handbooks, and audio-visual and other supporting materials. A typical sequence of technical assistance activities includes:

Exploratory

- *Consultation by telephone. NCRY will review with you your needs, problems, and local strengths that are relevant to Youth Participation. It will help you determine what in your agency or community can contribute to the development of Youth Participation and what some of the obstacles are that you can anticipate. This consultation can be the basis for determining what programs to develop.*

- *Program examples and models. NCRY will provide practical details about the operation of effective programs that will help you decide which kind of Youth Participation to develop.*

On-site

- *On-site consultation and diagnosis. A knowledgeable NCRY resource person will visit your programs to diagnose problems and strengths and help local staff increase Youth Participation.*

- *Training materials and activities. An experienced NCRY trainer will work with your staff or staff of a subcontractor. This training can be conducted at many different levels, ranging from "creating interest and a climate for Youth Participation" to training that assists in developing specific types of programs.*

Support

- *Resources for generating interest. While some Primes are themselves convinced of the value of Youth Participation, they may need help in generating the interest of others. Often they find that program examples, films, and other materials are quite effective in building support for new initiatives in Youth Participation.*

- *Conferences/workshops. Some Prime Sponsors find it useful to bring together their staff, as well as subcontractor staff, for a training workshop to kick off program planning in Youth Participation. This strategy helps develop knowledge and interest among all key persons. NCRY staff can help plan and lead these. Some Primes have used this strategy to involve other persons from their communities such as representatives from the private sector, LEAs, or CBOs. A carefully planned workshop with key community members can help build needed relationships between Primes and the wider community.*

- *Networking. Program planners and operators frequently learn best from others like themselves. Whenever possible NCRY facilitates communication and contact among people who are dealing with similar problems, some of whom may have found answers that others are looking for. Our materials, too, use this approach and are based on the concrete experience of effective programs.*

The activities described above are summarized in Table 1, which corrolates what NCRY does with what the Prime Sponsor does at each stage of a technical assistance sequence.

It should be emphasized that the type, content, and intensity of technical assistance in any given setting is negotiable between NCRY and the Prime Sponsor. The aim is to arrive at an arrangement that will meet the Prime Sponsor's needs, in accordance with both the principles of Youth Participation and NCRY's resources. This arrangement will be formalized in a written agreement for technical assistance that will precede actual on-site delivery. After signing the agreement, which specifies what is to occur in later phases, there is on-site technical assistance, including consultation, training, and any other activities called for in the agreement.

Finally, the Prime Sponsor may be interested in other technical assistance support, such as conferences, networking, and resources for generating interest in Youth Participation.

WHAT THE PRIME SPONSOR WILL DO

Prime Sponsors who want to explore options for Youth Participation that are most appropriate to their setting may begin by consulting this handbook. You may then contact NCRY to request more detailed or specific information. This initial contact should result in selection of the type of Youth Participation closest to your interest. Based on that choice, you then will be sent an information packet that includes examples of similar Youth Participation activities carried on elsewhere. These contacts and exchanges of information are considered exploratory, with no obligation on the Prime Sponsor's part.

The procedure for receiving technical assistance is essentially the same regardless of the type of Youth Participation selected. Your decision to receive technical assistance is based on a consultation with NCRY that assesses your needs and NCRY's resources. A formal agreement is then negotiated and signed, specifying objectives, types of assistance, timetable, outcomes, and mutual responsibilities.

The next step is to engage in a planning process to determine the best form for the selected Youth Participation activity to take in your setting. Appropriate personnel must be made available to participate in that process. Implementers of the Youth Participation activity must be identified from Prime Sponsor and/or subcontractor personnel. Space and staff time must be made available for training and workshop sessions. Depending on the nature and scope of the resulting Youth Participation effort, one or more adult coordinators must be put in charge of the project.

Prime Sponsor obligations will be specified in the agreement and further operationalized during the planning process. As Table 1 stipulates, there are some brief, written products for you to prepare at different stages of the technical assistance.

Table 1: Overview of Technical Assistance for Youth Participation

Type of Assistance	What NCRY Does	What the Prime Sponsor Does
EXPLORATORY		
Consultation by Telephone	Speak with PS. Prepare Preliminary Assessment of YP potential and obstacles.	Consult with staff and relevant Subcontractors. Speak with NCRY. Self-Assessment of interest in YP.
Program Models and Examples	Search, select, and send program examples and models to PS.	Read and review examples and models with staff, planning groups, and subcontractors. Select program models for possible local adaptation.
Written Agreement for Technical Assistance		
ON-SITE		
On-site Consultation	1-2 days on-site meeting of key PS and/or subcontractor staff. Recommendations for YP program development and for next steps.	Key staff meet with NCRY. Plan for next steps in program development.
Training Materials and Activities	Training design. Conduct training workshop(s) for YP that PS has selected. Follow-up training as needed	PS and/or subcontractor staff participate in training. Plan for implementing YP programs.
SUPPORT		
Resources for Generating Interest in YP	Idenfity and select A-V materials, printed materials, and resource persons. List resources; plan for using resources.	Arrange for appropriate persons and audiences to be exposed to materials and resource persons. Follow-up on interest that is generated. Plan for follow-up.
Conferences	Co-Plan conference on YP with PS. Arrange for outside resource persons to be available. Conference design.	Conference objectives. Do all logistics for conference, including site, invitations, etc. Plan for follow-up.
Networking	Identify and arrange contacts and Exchanges for PS will relevant resource persons. List resource persons; description of what each has to offer.	Objectives for contact with resources persons. Make contact by mail, phone, or visit. Follow-up on contacts.

- Underlining designates a brief written product.
- PS = Prime Sponsor
- YP = Youth Participation
- NCRY = National Commission on Resources for Youth